

- Grant Supports Public Safety and Reduces \$\$ Burden on Local Taxpayers -

BLOOMING GROVE, NY - U.S. Congressman John Hall (NY-19) announced today the awarding of a \$66,500 federal grant that he helped secure for the South Blooming Grove Fire District in the Town of Blooming Grove, NY. The money is from round 17 of the competitive 2009 fiscal year Fire Grants being administered by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency in cooperation with the U.S. Fire Administration to be used in areas relating to Operations and Safety Programs. Eligible activities for these grant awards are limited to training, equipment, personal protective equipment, wellness and fitness, and health and safety modifications to stations and facilities.

In this instance, the South Blooming Grove Fire District, which covers 17-square miles consisting of 2,000 homes and businesses, will use the grant funding for a new UHF communications system that will enable firefighters to communicate by radio with fire fighters from two nearby fire departments in Washingtonville and Salisbury Mills, NY, and with other responding fire departments at the local and county levels.

Without federal funding, the cost of the new equipment would have fallen on local taxpayers. With Rep. Hall's support, the district succeeded in earning this competitively awarded grant, preventing the need to raise taxes.

"I am pleased that the South Blooming Grove Fire District received this important federal grant to upgrade their communications equipment," said Rep. Hall. "Firefighters provide a critical service to the residents of our communities, and being in the line of danger they should be able to do their jobs safely and to the fullest."

Congressman Hall arranged for grant writing workshops to help local fire departments learn how to apply for these federal grants, which lead directly to the Fire District's successful grant application to the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Homeland Security.

"It's outstanding to get this funding grant," said current South Blooming Grove fire chief Joe

Castellano and former chief John McGuire in a joint statement. “We are a small fire department, and to step up and be able to operate with other companies in our area is important. This will make our firefighters better prepared and safer.”